



Urban development can increase stormwater runoff that picks up and transports trash, fertilizers, pesticides, oil, and toxic chemicals to Maryland's waterways and Chesapeake Bay. Best management practices (BMPs) are commonly used in Maryland to filter and treat this runoff. When designed properly and maintained regularly, stormwater management practices do not typically contain the standing water that attracts mosquitoes.

How does Maryland control stormwater runoff?

Maryland's stormwater management program requires that environmental site design techniques and small scale practices be implemented during the development process. Pervious surfaces like porous pavement, site development planning techniques such as the protection of conservation areas, and small scale practices like rain gardens filter runoff naturally without creating mosquito habitat. Smaller ponds used for stormwater management are designed to have continuously flowing water, varying depths, and aquatic vegetation. These features create a natural habitat for predators of mosquitoes such as dragonflies, birds, fish, and frogs.



Porous Pavement

Will a rain garden become a mosquito breeding ground?

No, mosquitoes lay eggs in standing water and rain gardens do not hold water long enough for mosquitoes to reproduce successfully. If a rain garden holds water for more than 48 hours after a rain storm, then it probably needs maintenance. For more information on how to maintain BMPs, or who administers your local stormwater management program, visit the Maryland Department of the Environment's stormwater management homepage: <http://bit.ly/MDESSWM>.



How can I avoid mosquito bites at home?

Mosquitoes prefer to live near people, bite people, and lay eggs in and near standing water created by people, e.g., buckets, bowls, toys, animal dishes, flower pots, and clogged gutters. Eliminate standing water in your yard and encourage everyone you know to do the same. Avoid being outside early and late in the day when mosquitoes are most active. Wear loose fitting clothing with long sleeves and pants. Use yellow "bug lights" outside at night; they do not attract mosquitoes like a regular incandescent, CFL, or LED bulb. Also, mosquitoes are relatively weak fliers; placing a large fan on your deck will help. Citronella candles have a mild repellent effect, but do not offer significantly more protection than other candles producing smoke. Use repellents when necessary.



Where can I find more information about mosquito control in Maryland?

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has a well-established mosquito control program. For more information on this program, visit the MDA's website: <http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/Zika.aspx>.

For the latest information on the Zika virus in Maryland, visit the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: <http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/pages/zika.aspx>.

